

Remarks/Arguments

Reconsideration of this application is requested.

Claim Status

Claims 7-14, 16-23 and 25 were presented. Claims 7, 11, 12, 20 and 21 are amended. Claims 8, 10 and 22 are canceled without prejudice. Claims 7, 9, 11-14, 16-21, 23 and 25 are now pending.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 8, 11, 20 and 22 are indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claim 7, from which claim 8 directly depends, is rewritten to include all limitations of claim 8, and claim 8 is canceled without prejudice. Claims 9, 13, 14 and 16-19 depend from claim 7, and claim 20 is amended to depend from claim 7. Thus, claims 7, 9, 13, 14 and 16-20 are now in condition for allowance.

Claim 11 depends from claim 7 via intervening claim 10. Claim 11 is rewritten in independent form to include all limitations of claims 7 and 10, and claim 10 is canceled without prejudice. Claim 12 is amended to depend from claim 11. Thus, claims 11 and 12 are now in condition for allowance.

Claim 21, from which claim 22 directly depends, is rewritten to include all limitations of claim 22, and claim 22 is canceled without prejudice. Claims 23 and 25 depend from claim 21. Thus, claims 21, 23 and 25 are now in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 102 and 103

Claims 7, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, 21, 23 and 25 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Whiteley (US 3,999,092). Claim 13 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over Whiteley in view of Takase (JP 10-285852). Claims 18 and 19 are rejected as obvious over Whiteley in view of Mitzutani (US 5,532,533).

As discussed above, claims 7, 9, 12-14, 16-19, 21, 23 and 25 are amended into allowable form, rendering their grounds for rejection moot. Claim 10 is canceled

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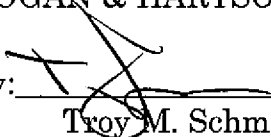
without prejudice. Accordingly, the rejections under 35 USC 102 and 103 should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

This application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned to resolve any issues that remain after consideration and entry of this amendment. Any fees due with this response may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,
HOGAN & HARTSON L.L.P.

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